

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

Apparatus and accompanying methods for use therein for implementing an integrated, virtual office user environment, through an office server(s), through which a remotely stationed user can access typical office network-based applications, including e-mail, file sharing and hosted thin-client programs, through a remotely located network, e.g., WAN, connected web browser. Specifically, a front end, namely a service enablement platform (SEP), to one or more office servers on a LAN is connected to both the WAN and LAN and acts both as a bridge between the user and his(her) office applications and as a protocol translator to enable bi-directional, web-based, real-time communication to occur between the browser and each such application. The SEP translates user input originating from the browser into application-specific protocols and applies a result to a corresponding office application server. The SEP monitors operational status of its connections and associated office servers. If a fault is detected, the SEP generates a corresponding alarm and reports it, through a web-based connection, to a centralized administrative web site. A customized configuration profile for each SEP, based on its expected network and operational environment, can be established for that SEP and stored on that site and subsequently downloaded to that SEP during its initial installation, thereby simplifying provisioning of the SEP. During initial

operation, the SEP, operating under a default profile, establishes, over an analog connection to the WAN, a management session with the site to obtain customer WAN access information, then tears down the analog connection and establishes a broadband WAN connection through which the SEP re-establishes its prior session and obtains a client certificate and its customized profile. The SEP then re-initializes itself to that particular profile.

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